



CHAPTER 2

Meet the Winstens: A ‘Downstart’ Anglo-Jewish family

Ruth Harrison was born as Ruth Winsten on June 24, 1920,¹ into a highly intellectual and artistic household. Her parents’ immigrant roots and outspoken commitment to pacifism, vegetarianism, and socialist welfare would have a profound impact on Harrison’s upbringing and later campaigning. Despite her intimate contact to leading Edwardian radicals, artists, and intellectuals, Ruth’s childhood was also characterised by persistent economic insecurity. The sum total of these experiences was a campaigner inculcated with the synthesist ideals of Edwardian reform, capable of moving confidently amongst Britain’s upper and middle classes, but equally comfortable with sacrificing economic well-being for moral victories. For the Winstens, the treatment of animals was always part of a wider social and ethical reform agenda.

Before the First World War, Harrison’s father, Samuel–‘Simy’/‘Sammy’/‘Simon’–Weinstein (1893–1991), and her mother, Clara Birnberg (ca. 1892–1989), belonged to a group of *avant-garde* writers and artists from London’s East End. Retrospectively known as the ‘Whitechapel Boys,’ the group had close ties with the influential Slade School of Art and met regularly to discuss politics, art, and literature. Among its members were Isaac Rosenberg, John Rodker, Joseph Leftwich, David Bomberg, and Mark Gertler. Jacob Epstein and Sonia Cohen also

¹Richard D. Ryder, “Harrison, Ruth (1920–2000),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

had contact with the group. In contrast to the affluent and nearly contemporaneous Bloomsbury group, members of the ‘Whitechapel Boys’ came from mostly poor, Eastern European Jewish backgrounds.²

Clara Birnberg was a painter whose work was included in the 1914 Whitechapel exhibition on *Twentieth Century Art: A Review of Modern Movements*.³ In 1915, Isaac Rosenberg portrayed her as *Girl in a Red Dress*.⁴ David Bomberg also painted her as *Sibyl* in an earlier, now-lost painting. Birnberg had been born in Romania in 1892 as the second daughter of Michael, a former teacher, and Fanny Birnberg. The Birnbergs were originally from Tarnopol in Galicia but had been forced to flee as a result of pogroms from what is now modern Ukraine to Romania. The family subsequently moved to London where Michael had been promised employment, which failed to materialise. Highly educated but speaking limited English, the family instead established a small and not very profitable cabinet-making business on Lemn Street in Aldgate. According to Clara Birnberg’s unpublished autobiography, life was hard. Arriving in London to join Michael on Edward VII’s coronation day in 1902, Clara was struck by the crass inequality of Edwardian Britain:

we found ourselves stranded on the docks among large boxes and sacks full of grain. We expected my father to await us but by some error of time he did not come (...). Soon all [waiting passengers] were bundled into a van covered with canvas and drawn by two horses. (...). We had the opportunity to see the unswept streets, the horror of men and women lounging along the sordid pavements, children lying about (...), and amidst all drunken men and women dancing and singing: “On the coronation day” (...) My heart sank as I saw the shabby little houses (...). This, our first day in London has ever stayed in my mind. As though awakened from a deep sleep to find oneself in hell.⁵

Economic circumstances were difficult. Later describing herself as a ‘downstart,’ Clara remembered debt collectors calling at the family’s

² Rachel Dickson and Sarah Macdougall, “The Whitechapel Boys,” *Jewish Quarterly* 51/3 (2004), 29–30; 32–33, Jean Moorcroft Wilson, *Isaac Rosenberg: The Making of a Great War Poet: A New Life* 2nd edition (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2009), 94–95.

³ Dickson and Macdougall, “The Whitechapel Boys,” 29 & 34.

⁴ Wilson, *Isaac Rosenberg*, 101.

⁵ Whitechapel Gallery Archive, Clare Winsten Autobiography, WG/DON/1, [subsequently, Winsten Autobiography; I have used the page numbers on the typed manuscript despite a doubling of page numbers in the original manuscript], 25–27; see also 46–47, 50.

house and being forced to continuously economise at home and school. Despite their relative poverty, the family of five still managed to lead a rich cultural life. Living in immediate proximity to the recently built Whitechapel Gallery and Toynbee Hall, the Birnbergs quickly became part of the vibrant artistic, musical, and intellectual milieu of London's East End. Michael Birnberg was later described as one of the new Anglo-Jewish intellectuals of Whitechapel, and Clara and her younger brother, Jonas (or 'Johanes,' b. 1894 in Galatz, died 1970), were able to win prestigious scholarships from London's County Council.⁶

Their academic prowess enabled both children to climb Britain's social ladder. Jonas obtained a stipend to study mathematics at Queen's College Cambridge, was London's chess champion in 1924 and 1935, and taught at Corfe Grammar School and Goldsmiths College (now University of London). In 1928, he married his Cambridge contemporary Naomi Bentwich (born 1891), daughter of Herbert Bentwich, founder of the Hampstead Synagogue, ex-secretary to John Maynard Keynes, and founder of the vegetarian Carmelcourt School.⁷ Clara's 'downstart' career was also rapid. After first visiting Rutland Street Council School, she was soon admitted to Central Foundation Girls School (Tower Hamlets). Her artistic talent enabled Clara to win a scholarship to the Royal Female School of Art, which was part of the Central School of Art and Design (today Central St Martins) in 1910.⁸ Shortly afterwards, on the "strength of her promise" Clara transferred to the Slade School of Fine Art, where she studied between 1910 and 1912.⁹ Although Jonas was critical of Clara's commitment to a potentially penniless artistic career, her parents used their meagre resources to help Clara rent her own studio on City Road.¹⁰

⁶Winsten Autobiography, 46–47; Sarah Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl: Clare Winsten and Isaac Rosenberg," in Sarah Macdougall, Dickson Rachel, and Ben Uri Art Gallery (eds.), *Whitechapel at War: Isaac Rosenberg & His Circle* (London: Ben Uri Gallery 2008), 100.

⁷"Birnberg, Benedict Michael," in W. Rubinstein and Michael Jolles (eds), *The Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History*; Ariadne Birnberg, *Most Beautiful Maynard*, <https://longandvariable.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/most-beautiful-maynard.pdf> [01.05.2020]; Winsten Autobiography, 44.

⁸Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 100.

⁹Sarah Macdougall, "'Something Is Happening There': Early British Modernism, the Great War and the 'Whitechapel Boys,'" in Michael J. K. Walsh (ed.), *London, Modernism, and 1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 127, the Slade School offers two annual Clare Winsten Memorial Award for its female students.

¹⁰Winsten Autobiography, 44–45, 52A; MacDougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 99.

At Slade, Clara maintained a low profile as the only female working-class Jewish student of her generation. However, outside of Slade, the early 1910s saw her gain increasing visibility as the sole “Girl” member of the Whitechapel Boys.¹¹ Involved in a stormy relationship with David Bomberg, Birnberg’s early paintings (e.g. *Dawn* [ca. 1912]) were influenced by Post-Impressionism and Vorticism.¹² By 1913, she had also enrolled in book illustration and sculpture courses at the Central School and Slade to be “free of financial worries while practicing as a painter.”¹³ Her ability to work and generate income in multiple media as well as her Slade connections would turn out to be a vital asset (Image 2.1).



Image 2.1 Clare Winsten, Portrait by Isaac Rosenberg, oil on canvas 1916 (image courtesy of UCL Art Gallery and Bridgeman Images)

¹¹ Macdougall, “Whitechapel Girl,” 99 & 102.

¹² Macdougall, “Something Is Happening There,” 131–32, Macdougall, “Whitechapel Girl,” 99–108.

¹³ Winsten Autobiography, 53 & 55.

Throughout this period, the entire Birnberg family engaged actively in contemporary politics. In her autobiography, Clara Birnberg recalls becoming politically sensitised to social injustice and women's rights while attending school in London's East End. Together with a friend, she would regularly go "to the meetings in Hyde Park or the Embankment Gardens" and "offered to sell [suffragette publications] in different places."¹⁴ Doing so was not without risks. Clara describes having to avoid intimate approaches by young men in the crowds, police violence, as well as being assaulted by an old man while selling *The Freedom League*. When suffragette Emily Davison was trampled to death by King George V's horse in 1913, all three Birnberg women joined the funeral march. Another significant event for the family was Clara's conversion to vegetarianism around 1910. Trying to take a short cut through a small passage one morning, Clara:

saw a group of little boys staring eagerly into a crack of a door, leading into a wooden building. A man had also joined them. Suddenly I heard a scuffle, men cursing gruffly, piteous cries of shuffling cattle ... a pool of blood streaming out from underneath the wooden doors. I rushed madly out, realising furiously that there was murder behind those doors, hating the eager sense of curiosity shewn by the man and the boys, relishing slaughter! (...) That evening when I came home I told my mother and my sister that I would never eat meat.¹⁵

Her entire family converted to vegetarianism alongside her.

As described by historian Elsa Richardson, converting to vegetarianism was no trivial choice and carried specific political connotations. Since 1847, Britain's Vegetarian Society had drawn support from a mix of working- and middle-class campaigners and religious dissenters. Although it is not clear whether the Birnbergs formally joined the Society, their personal politics aligned closely with the vegetarian movement's progressivist advocacy for a wider moral and welfarist reform of society. At the heart of this advocacy was a contractarian notion of universal kinship between humans and animals. This kinship entailed moral responsibility for the welfare of all animal and human life and a condemnation of 'flesh eating' as a form of spiritual and physical desecration. Drawing heavily on evolutionary theories, key campaigners argued that reforming one's own diet was a

¹⁴Winsten Autobiography, 37.

¹⁵Winsten Autobiography, 43.

necessary component of creating a more progressive, cooperative, and egalitarian society.¹⁶

Clara's synthesist ethics of universal kinship and social and spiritual improvement were shared by her fiancé and fellow Whitechapel Boy Samuel Weinstein. 'Simy' had been part of the Whitechapel Boys¹⁷ from the beginning and had grown up only a few streets away from Clara. Preparing to go to teacher-training college after a brief stint at the London School of Economics,¹⁸ Weinstein came from a Russian-Jewish family with strong Marxist sympathies. His father was a "bearded Jewish scholarly type"¹⁹ from Russian Vilna. His older brother Rachmiel (Aaron) had stayed in Russia, where he became a labour leader and prominent figure within the Jewish social democratic Bund, which had been founded in Vilna in 1897. Temporarily deported by the Tsarist regime for resisting conscription,²⁰ Rachmiel joined the subsequent revolution and was appointed Soviet Commissioner and member of the Committee for Settling Jews on the Land in Ukraine in 1924 before falling victim to Stalinist purges under Beria.²¹ Another of Simy's siblings, Mary, was an outspoken London Zionist, and her husband Zalkind Stalbow was active in *Bnai Zion*.²²

Simy shared his family's internationalist leanings and was also a convinced pacifist. In 1911, he joined the Young Socialists together with Isaac Rosenberg.²³ Working as a teacher in an East End Board school, he taught one of Rosenberg's younger brothers and was active in numerous local societies like the Ben Uri Art Society and the Jewish Association for Advancement in Arts and Sciences.²⁴ Following the outbreak of the First

¹⁶Elsa Richardson, "Man is not a meat-eating animal: vegetarians and evolution in late-Victorian Britain," *Victorian Review* 45/1 (2019), 117–134; see also: James Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians: The Vegetarian Movement in Victorian Britain* (London and New York: Tauris, 2007).

¹⁷Dickson and Macdougall, "The Whitechapel Boys," 30 & 34.

¹⁸Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 110; Winsten Autobiography, 59–60.

¹⁹Quoted according to Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 109.

²⁰"Stephen Winsten, 1893–1991", *Remembering the men who said no, conscientious objectors 1916–1919, Peace Pledge Union project*, https://menwhosaidno.org/men/men_files/w/winstent_s.html [30.04.2020].

²¹"Soviet Government Will Not Interfere with Administration of Funds for Jewish Colonization Work in Russia," *Jewish Telegraph*, 06.10.1924; "Communist Paper Publishes List of Executed Soviet Jewish Intellectuals," *Jewish Telegraph*, 12.04.1956; Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 109.

²²Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 109; Wilson, *Isaac Rosenberg*, 101.

²³Wilson, *Isaac Rosenberg*, 101.

²⁴Macdougall, "Something Is Happening There," 126; 134; Dickson and MacDougall, "The Whitechapel Boys," 34.

World War in 1914, he joined the pacifist No Conscription Fellowship and the Peace Pledge Union alongside his fiancé, Clara Birnberg, and their mutual friends Isaac Rosenberg, and—the later promoter of Soviet art and literature—John Rodker.²⁵ While Rosenberg was forced to enlist in 1915 for financial reasons, Weinstein, Rodker, and Clara's brother Jonas resisted the introduction of conscription in Britain in 1916.²⁶

To prepare for his upcoming trial, Simy Weinstein enlisted the help of prominent anti-war activist and Labour politician Fenner Brockway, who advised him to contact Tolstoy's biographer Aylmer Maude for a witness statement.²⁷ According to historian Ann Kramer, Maude warned officials that pacifism came natural to Weinstein, who would be a "nuisance"²⁸ if forced to fight. This strategy backfired. When Simy formally registered his objection to conscription at the Hackney Tribunal where he was working as a supply teacher in 1916, his claim that he knew "what it is to kill a pig, I will not kill a man"²⁹ fell on death ears. Tribunal members asked whether the fact that Britain had provided him with a teaching job did not mean that he owed "something to the country."³⁰ According to Weinstein:

[The official] meant that I was a dirty cad... I was then teaching in the roughest school in London ... so I said to him, 'It is because I *love* England sir, that I'm willing to serve in any position and do a service which I don't think you would ever do.' 'Well,' he said, 'I think we'll put you down as a political objector and therefore you can't get exemption. We can only give it to religious [objectors].'³¹

²⁵ Wilson, *Isaac Rosenberg*, 142–43, Macdougall, "Something Is Happening There," 131–33, Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 110–14; "Stephen Winsten, 1893–1991", *Remembering the men who said no, conscientious objectors 1916–1919, Peace Pledge Union project*, https://menwhosaidno.org/men/men_files/w/winstent_s.html [30.04.2020].

²⁶ Ian Patterson, "The Translation of Soviet Literature," in Rebecca Beasley and Philip Ross Bullock (eds.), *Russia in Britain, 1880–1940: From Melodrama to Modernism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 189–90, Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 112.

²⁷ Ann Kramer, *Conscientious Objectors of the First World War: A Determined Resistance* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2014), 53.

²⁸ Quoted according to Kramer, *Conscientious Objectors*, 53.

²⁹ Quoted according to "Stephen Winsten, 1893–1991", *Remembering the men who said no, conscientious objectors 1916–1919, Peace Pledge Union project*, https://menwhosaidno.org/men/men_files/w/winstent_s.html [30.04.2020]; other sources attribute this statement to a butcher whom Winsten met while he was imprisoned: Sara Ayad, "The Winstens of Whitechapel: Clara Birnberg and Simy Weinstein," Art UK, <https://artuk.org/discover/stories/the-winstens-of-whitechapel-clara-birnberg-and-simy-weinstein> [22.02.2021].

³⁰ Quoted according to Kramer, *Conscientious Objectors*, 53.

³¹ Quoted according to Kramer, *Conscientious Objectors*, 53.

Perhaps hoping that prison would change his mind, the tribunal sentenced Weinstein to three months of incarceration at Wormwood Scrubs prison. Following this, Weinstein was handed over to military authorities, who promptly court-martialled him at Bedford Barracks in November 1916 for disobeying conscription orders. In an ultimately pointless exercise, the military sentenced Simy to six months of hard labour before releasing and re-arresting him for resisting conscription. This cycle continued until Weinstein was permanently released in 1919—well after the end of fighting.³²

Imprisonment and the social fallout of being a conscientious objector placed a severe strain on the Whitechapel Boys and their families and friends. Serving time in Wandsworth, Bedford, and Reading, Simy Weinstein later published a volume of poetry titled *Chains* (1920) on this experience. It is possible that he was also involved in hunger strikes during his imprisonment. Fellow Whitechapel Boy John Rodker first escaped arrest and hid with the poet R.C. Trevelyan but was soon caught and imprisoned in Dartmoor. Similar to Weinstein, Rodker later used his experiences to anonymously write *Memoirs of Other Fronts* (1932). By contrast, Clara's brother Jonas evaded imprisonment at Cambridge.³³

Life was not easier outside prison. Following the outbreak of war, Clara had initially volunteered to teach art at a school for boys but a pregnancy and Simy's incarceration in 1916 prompted her to move to the countryside so that she could be closer to her husband. Living with the wife of another conscientious objector, she caused a stir among locals with her short hair and habit of walking barefoot. The couple's first child, Theodora, was born at a wealthy friend's home in Warwickshire while Stephen was imprisoned in 1917. Theodora's birth increased Clara's commitment to vegetarianism and other reform movement ideals such as eating raw and 'natural' foods and nudism. It also prompted Clara to move back to London where a wealthy sister of Samuel—probably Mary—provided her with accommodation in Highgate. In between prison visits, Clara designed toys and supported pacifist, vegetarian, and suffragette causes.³⁴

The end of the war brought not only an end of imprisonment but also a severance of artistic and ideological ties between the former Whitechapel

³² Peace Pledge Union "Remembering" project; and Winsten Autobiography, 68–70.

³³ Macdougall, "Something Is Happening There," 140, Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 112.

³⁴ Winsten Autobiography, 72–85.

Boys. Following Simy’s release, Samuel and Clara anglicised their names to Stephen and Clare Winsten and briefly moved to Bournemouth before finding it necessary to move back to London where they could rely on friends and family for support.³⁵ After moving in with Russian communist contacts of Stephen in Bedford Park, the family soon relocated to a studio close to Kensington Parks. Sporadic patronage and picture sales could not alleviate long-term money worries, which were exacerbated by the fact that Stephen found it hard to gain employment as a teacher due to his status as a conscientious objector.³⁶

Despite their financial woes, the Winstens’ ties to London’s artistic and intellectual milieu remained excellent. In Kensington, they enjoyed regular contact with Lucien Pissarro and his family. Despite mixed reviews, Stephen contributed to journals like *Voices* and the Yiddish *Renesans* and organised cultural events at Toynbee Hall. Meanwhile, Clare’s work was displayed at various salons and exhibitions.³⁷ In 1920, the Winstens—with Clare already pregnant—temporarily moved to a relative’s Gothic inspired summer house before returning to London in preparation for the birth of Ruth. Ruth herself was born prematurely at seven months in Fulham in London. According to Clare, the birth was dramatic, with Ruth barely surviving the first hours of her life. Ruth’s first visitors were Lucien Pissarro and his wife. Clare’s drawings of the first seven days after Ruth’s birth have unfortunately disappeared (Image 2.2).³⁸

Things quickly became crowded at the family’s Kensington flat. Clare and Stephen slept in the upstairs studio while the two children shared a wide bed with an au pair. Ahead of the birth of their third child, Christopher Blake Winsten in 1923, the family decided to leave the metropolis for Ebenezer Howard’s second Garden City in Welwyn, where they purchased a small house with money from Clare’s brother and a wealthy friend. In Welwyn, the Winstens enjoyed close contact with the many artists, civil servants, and intellectuals who had moved there; helped open a local Montessori school; and organised lectures by well-known friends, including George Bernard Shaw.³⁹

³⁵ Winsten Autobiography, 102–103.

³⁶ Macdougall, “Whitechapel Girl,” 112–113; Winsten Autobiography, 105–106; 128; his right to vote was also curtailed by the 1918 Representation of Peoples Act.

³⁷ Winsten Autobiography, 92, 97, 99–, 104–109, 114–116, 128; MacDougall, “Whitechapel Girl,” 113.

³⁸ Winsten Autobiography, 110, 112, 115–116, 138–139.

³⁹ Winsten Autobiography, 116, 138–139, 140, 145–146, 154, 117, 119–121, 123–133, 136D, 161–163.



Image 2.2 Winsten Family Portrait of Clare, Theodora, Ruth, and Stephen, Photograph ca. 1922 (image courtesy of Jonathan Harrison)

For the sake of their children's education, Clare and Stephen decided to move back to Hampstead in North London towards the end of the 1920s. All three children were placed in local schools, and Christopher managed to win a stipend for University College School, from which he went on to study mathematics at Cambridge and become a leading probability theorist at the University of Essex. Clare and Stephen continued to cultivate contacts to London's artistic circles and co-edited the magazine *To-morrow* with Hugh Walpole and Bertrand Allison.⁴⁰ However, the couple's own artistic output became increasingly sporadic. As a mother of

⁴⁰Winsten Autobiography, 135–136; “Winsten, Clare & Stephen,” in W. Rubenstein and Michael Jolles (eds.), *Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History*.

three, Clare complained that living among Britain's artistic elite was not the same as being recognised as an artist: "It seemed as though success was not for me. Always on the brink but never there. (...). Had I been mistaken in myself? Why had I been given a scholarship, why had I been praised by many for my work? It is a humiliating experience, that of being cast out of the group of artists of my generation."⁴¹

A major exception to this perceived lack of recognition was Clare's commission to portray Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi on his 1931 visit to Britain. Clare had been selected as portraitist on the grounds of the Winstens' pacifist vegetarian credentials and ties to local Indian activists. Although she denied being a portrait artist, Clare also portrayed other famous individuals and family acquaintances including Ebenezer Howard, Ezra Pound, Benjamin Britten, W.H. Auden, Dmitri Shostakovich, Maria Montessori, and family friend George Bernard Shaw. The portraits not only proved to be some of her best-known works but also provided much-needed income for the Winsten household.⁴²

Shaw in particular would become an important patron of and influence on Clare, Stephen, and their children. Ahead of the outbreak of the Second World War, the Winstens briefly moved to Wales and Huntingdonshire before settling in Ayot St Lawrence in Hertfordshire in 1940, where they became Shaw's neighbours.⁴³ The family's intimate contact with Shaw created economic opportunities and intensified their engagement with the synthesist animal and human ethics of Edwardian reform movements. As a playwright and public figure, Shaw personified the integration of socialist, pacifist, vegetarian, and humanitarian values. After coming to London in 1876, the Irish-born dramatist had become immersed in radical politics, converted to vegetarianism around 1881, and joined the newly formed socialist Fabian Society in 1884. Eleven years later, he co-founded the London School of Economics—where Samuel Weinstein briefly took courses—with fellow Fabians Sidney and Beatrice Webb and Graham Wallas.⁴⁴

Shaw's vision of society's moral evolution via vegetarianism and peaceful socialism was influenced by his friend Henry Stephens Salt. A former assistant headmaster of Eton, Salt campaigned for the humane treatment of all creatures and co-founded the Humanitarian League in 1891. Drawing on

⁴¹ Winsten Autobiography, 149–150.

⁴² Winsten Autobiography, 146, 154; Ayad, "The Winstens of Whitechapel"; Dickson and MacDougall, "The Whitechapel Boys," 34; notable sculptures include "Joan of Arc" in Ayot and "Mother and Child" (1968) at Toynbee Hall.

⁴³ Winsten Autobiography, 154; Ayad, "The Winstens of Whitechapel".

⁴⁴ Michael Holroyd, *Bernard Shaw* (London: Random House, 2011), 51–53, 102–107, 126–127, 291

support from a wide range of influential friends, including Arts and Crafts socialist William Morris and anarcho-communist Prince Kropotkin, he campaigned for criminal reform, education, sanitation, and decolonisation alongside vegetarianism, ending blood sports, and preventing the use of animals for fashion. In 1892, he published *Animals' Rights*, which drew on a mix of evolutionary argumentation, natural history, materialism, and Benthamite philosophy to argue that all animals should be protected from unnecessary suffering. According to Salt, there was no dichotomy between 'nature' and 'society' and between the struggle to improve human conditions and for a more humane treatment of animals.⁴⁵

The Winstens' vegetarian values and pacifist credentials made them perfect neighbours for Shaw. Spending much of the 1940s in the orbit of the ageing playwright, the family also enjoyed intimate contact with the many likeminded Edwardian reformers visiting Ayot. Stephen in particular profited from this proximity. Commuting to London to fire watch during the Blitz,⁴⁶ he later published a biographical account of his wartime *Days with Bernard Shaw*.⁴⁷ In 1946, he also edited a *Festschrift* for Shaw including contributions from political, scientific, and literary luminaries such as J.B. Priestley, H.G. Wells, John Maynard Keynes, and Aldous Huxley.⁴⁸ Drawing on Shaw's archived personal correspondence with Henry Salt, who had died in 1939, Stephen also published *Salt and His Circle* in 1951.⁴⁹ The book adopted a light-hearted tone to revisit—through the eyes of Shaw—crucial episodes of Salt's life and humanitarian struggles via invented dialogues, letter excerpts, and psychological characterisations of key figures. Although it had no lasting impact on scholarship, the often-idolising tone of *Salt and His Circle* is indicative of the extent to which Stephen shared Salt's fusion of socialist, pacifist, vegetarian, and evolutionary concepts of interspecies kinship (Image 2.3).⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Brett Clark and John Bellamy Foster. "Henry S. Salt, socialist animal rights activist: An introduction to Salt's A Lover of Animals," *Organization & Environment* 13/4 (2000), 468–473; Simon Wild, "Henry S. Salt," *Henry S. Salt Society*, <https://www.henrysalt.co.uk/life/biography/> [01.05.2020].

⁴⁶ Stephen Winsten, *Days with Bernard Shaw* (London: Readers Union/ Hutchinson, 1951), 118.

⁴⁷ Winsten, *Days with Bernard Shaw*.

⁴⁸ Rod Preece, *Animal Sensibility and Inclusive Justice in the Age of Bernard Shaw* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 19.

⁴⁹ Stephen Winsten, *Salt and His Circle* (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd, 1951).

⁵⁰ See Stephen Winsten's discussion of vegetarianism, evolutionary theory, animal rights and kinship, and the humanitarian league, *Salt and His Circle*, 87–88, 102, 116–118, 127, 131–134, 182.

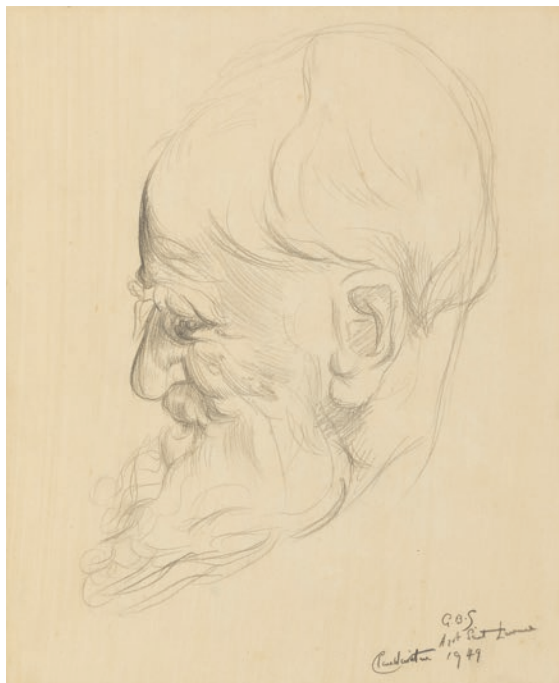


Image 2.3 George Bernard Shaw by Clare Winsten, pencil on paper laid on board, 1949, NPG 6891 (image courtesy of National Portrait Gallery)

Personal and intellectual ties between the neighbours remained good for most of the decade. According to biographer Anthony Gibbs, Shaw considered the Winstens “a talented Bohemian family who offered him what no one else in the village could, intelligent conversation.”⁵¹ Shaw engaged in active patronage of the entire family. In 1947, he commissioned Clare to create a statue of *Joan of Arc* for Shaw’s garden around which his ashes were later scattered and asked her to illustrate his *Buoyant Billions: A Comedy of No Manners in Prose* in 1949.⁵² The Winsten children

⁵¹ Quoted according to Anthony Matthews Gibbs, *A Bernard Shaw Chronology* (London: Palgrave, 2001), 393.

⁵² Gibbs, *A Bernard Shaw Chronology*, 392–393; Shaw allegedly refused to pay for Clare Winsten’s painted portrait of him; there was also a short period of estrangement following disagreement between Shaw and Clare Winsten about the placement of the statue in the garden, J.P. Wearing, *Bernard Shaw and Nancy Astor. Selected Correspondence of Bernard Shaw* (Toronto et al.: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 202, 207; see also Winsten Autobiography, 222–225; 263–265.

also received support: Shaw contributed £2000 to Christopher's Cambridge education, trained Ruth in drama, and helped Theodora, a Prizeman in Stage Design at the Slade, secure her first commission as designer for his *Buoyant Billions* play.⁵³ He also dedicated a pamphlet to Theodora, which was posthumously edited and illustrated by Stephen and Clare (*My dear Dorothea: a practical system of moral education for females, embodied in a letter to a young person of that sex*).⁵⁴

It was only in 1949—one year ahead of Shaw's death—that neighbourly relations soured. Having previously ignored accusations that the Winstens were making a living out of him, significant inaccuracies in Stephen's writings forced Shaw to publish a disclaimer about *Days with Bernard Shaw* in the *Times Literary Supplement*.⁵⁵ Shaw also refused to pay for an extension of the Winstens' lease at Ayot. Although he allegedly later regretted it, the decision forced the cash-strapped family to move to Oxford.⁵⁶ For Stephen and Clare, the move marked the end of easy access to Britain's cultural elite. Forty years after joining the Whitechapel Boys, the couple's 'downstart' careers had peaked. While the Winstens never achieved the artistic fame of friends like Rosenberg, their lived pacifist and vegetarian values and social milieu left an indelible mark on their children.

⁵³ Dan H. Laurence, *Bernard Shaw Theatrics. Selected Correspondence of Bernard Shaw*. (Toronto et al.: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 231; Michael Holroyd, *Bernard Shaw. 1918–1950. The Lure of Fantasy* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1991), 467.

⁵⁴ Macdougall, "Whitechapel Girl," 113–14; Gibbs, *A Bernard Shaw Chronology*, 392–393.

⁵⁵ George Bernard Shaw, "Conversation Pieces," *TLS* (15.01.1949), 41.

⁵⁶ Holroyd, *Shaw. Lure of Fantasy*, 470.

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